

Report of Site Findings
University of Arizona-Cross-Categorical Special Education Certification(undergraduate)
November 12, 2007

The initial program submission of the Cross-Categorical Special Education Certification program (undergraduate) from the University of Arizona was submitted to the Arizona Department of Education January 15, 2006. The site visit conducted on November 14-16, 2007 included a review of the program. Program approval was not extended beyond State Board approval date of December 31, 2007. Between the site visit and re-submission of program documents, face-to-face meetings, phone conferences and emails occurred between ADE Highly Qualified Professionals and Exceptional Student Services staff and faculty in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and School Psychology at the University of Arizona. The program was resubmitted to ADE on September 12th, 2007 as required in the program recommendation.

Three (3) recommendations and comments for the Cross-Categorical Special Education Certification program from the Report of Site Findings are shown below.

Recommendations:

1. *Program does not have the courses that are required in Arizona State Board of Education rules for a program in Cross-Categorical. Some required disability areas are not addressed in coursework or field work. The cross-categorical program must ensure students have 3 of 5 disability areas in their student teaching experience.*

The resubmitted "Cross-Categorical Special Education Certification program (undergraduate level) is a sixty (60) credit program leading to the Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education. The program consists of a three semester sequence of coursework and culminates in a one semester (15 weeks) supervised internship in an approved special education setting with a certified special education teacher." The course sequence meets the coursework and student teaching requirements identified in R7-2-610C. The program sequence reflects twenty-one hours of special education coursework and 12 credit hours internship (SERP 493). The twenty-one credit hour program sequence includes:

- Survey of Exceptional Students SERP 400 (3)
- Foundations of Emotional Disorders, Mental Retardation, Learning Disabilities, Physical/Other Health Impairment SERP 409 (3) and SERP 415 (3)
- Diagnosis and Assessment of Students with Mild Disabilities SERP 407a(3), SERP 402 (3) and SERP 415
- Teaching Methodologies and Strategies for Students with Disabilities SERP 407b (3), SERP 402, and SERP 415
- Elective: Special Services in the Schools SERP 403 (3)

The student teacher internship (SERP 493) reflects experiences in 3 of the 5 disability areas of cross-categorical education. The syllabi for SERP 493 states: "The 15 week experience must be implemented in a classroom setting in which interns have the opportunity to work with students in at least three of the five special education categories as mandated by the Arizona Department of Education Licensing Authority." The SERP

493 is the capstone experience in the Cross-Categorical K-12 Teacher Preparation Program.

Students are required to complete Structured English Immersion (LRC416) to meet the SEI requirement.

2. *The program must be revised and aligned to Arizona State Board requirements for Certification.*

Re-submitted syllabi reflect:

- Course objectives aligned with national (CEC) and state standards (APTS) at the standard and indicator levels.
- Benchmark assignments clearly identified and aligned to CEC and APTS standards. A “Summary of Benchmark Assignments” was included in the submission.
- Rubrics for assessing student competency in meeting the standards.
- Midterm Progress Report of Student Teacher Performance and the Final Appraisal of Student Teacher Performance aligned to the APTS at the standard level.

Five criteria and five performance levels (1-5) were identified on the progress report. Criteria include:

- Demonstrates Content Knowledge
- Designs and Plans Instruction
- Implements Instruction
- Creates and Maintains a Positive Learning Climate
- Professionalism

The Program Matrix does not consistently reflect the evidence (benchmark assignments) identified in the re-submitted syllabi for assessing candidate’s competency in meeting national and state standards.

3. *Provide summary of data or assessment plan for data collection. Plan needs to provide a description of data elements, activities, timelines and person responsible.*

Follow-up data from graduates beginning Fall, 2003 were included in the re-submission. Analysis of the data between fall, 2003 and spring, 2007 indicates that thirty-seven (37) students have completed the Cross-Categorical K-12 program. Twenty-five of the thirty-seven teachers are currently teaching in Arizona.

A plan for tracking student outcomes was provided. According to the plan, “Program coordinator, Dr. Betty Carlson, will maintain a file for each student in her office that includes the attached Student Assessment Record. The form will document student outcome data for the two years in which the student is in the program and for the three years following graduation. Data collected will include:

- University grades in certification and education courses
- Cooperating teacher evaluations following student teaching
- Portfolio rubric scores
- AEPA scores and date passed

- Employment following graduation
- Supervisor feedback one and three years after graduation
- Form for recording progress on **benchmark assignments** throughout the program.

During the 2007-2008 school year, faculty will explore the possibility of using a software package such as *TaskStream* or *Teachnology* for maintaining data on benchmark assignments and student outcomes.

Comments:

1. Program appears to be an elementary program with selected special education coursework: however the course does not address the required disabilities.

See program sequence under Recommendation #1.

2. Students feel they are completing an elementary program; they have two field rotations (one in elementary and one in special education); no field experience with multiple disabilities.

See program sequence under Recommendation #1.

3. Cross-categorical students stated they have not had a special education methods course, no classroom management course and not enough field experience in a special education setting (e.g. no experience with LD students).

See program sequence under Recommendation #1.

4. Alignment to Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) standards was difficult to determine.

The program is competency based and is organized around national (Council for Exceptional Children/CEC) and State of Arizona teacher certification (APTS) standards.”

RECOMMENDATION TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

☒ Two (2) Year Approval

To extend the valid program approval to five years, the institution must submit to the Arizona Department of Education no later than 90 days prior to the expiration of the program approval the following documents:

- Coursework sequence;
- Coursework syllabi that align with State and National Standards and Indicators;
- Coursework syllabi that identify benchmark assignments with corresponding rubrics for assessing candidate’s competency;
- Updated Program Matrix that provides evidence of how state and national standards are being addressed related to coursework, field experiences and assessments to determine a candidate’s competency in meeting the standards;
- One year of data related to candidates’ competency in meeting the standards based on coursework, field experiences and assessments identified in the Program Matrix.